

Remembering Nancy

*John Bishop**

If law students are the lifeblood of a law school, Professor Nancy Schultz was the beating heart of Chapman's Fowler School of Law. For twenty-seven years she ran the Competitions Program at Chapman with passion and humility. Her loss is devastating.

Nancy had a deep love for keeping things simple. Despite having studied and practiced legal advocacy for more than forty years in total, she distilled her core principles to the basics—"slow down," "words matter," "figure out what you want and ask for it"—and refused to let students lose themselves in the weeds of legal jargon.¹

On these simple building blocks Nancy built a palace of champions. She directed moot court, mock trial and dispute resolution teams to hundreds of trophies, but she was deeply opposed to taking credit for them. She never wanted to be photographed and intentionally omitted her name from publications, competition problems, seminar materials, and anything else she could get away with. She coached her final competition team to an international victory over more than thirty countries from around the world in Dubai, and she commemorated it with a simple email to her faculty colleagues extolling the character of her victorious students, without a word about the deep sacrifices she made to coach the team to glory. It was her final email to the faculty before her passing and it contained a simple attachment: a photo of the three victors with their trophy.

In her deep humility, she became a hero. She made hundreds of friends in dozens of countries—she could speak with authority on the quality of jazz in New Orleans, the quality of food in Rio de

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¹ Nancy would have used the word "bullsh*t" here, and if this word survives the editing process and appears in a legal journal, it would have been to Nancy's great and mischievous delight.

Janeiro, the quality of traditional folk music in Ireland, and the quality of musicals on Broadway. She was also fearless, with a biting sense of humor and a distinct lack of patience for those who thought they would be heard because of their many words. She inspired profound awe in her students, who wanted nothing more than to make her proud. Yet, her pride would only come to fruition when she beheld the lawyers they would become: judges, partners, prosecutors, public defenders, public interest lawyers, negotiators, mediators, coaches, and program directors. No statement gave her greater joy than to say “they are just such great people.”

The author is unremarkable and not unique, except insofar as Nancy only had one successor. In an effort to say exactly what I mean and nothing more: Chapman is now two months into a future without Nancy. As the new director, I find myself watching dedicated Nancy-trained alumni coach Chapman students to nationwide success. The program is doing very well, but the success is bittersweet: I find it devastating that I can't call Nancy and tell her about every team, every judge, every coach, every close finish, and every award. Celebrating is not the same without her. I think part of me will always feel like we are all doing it for her. I hope Nancy is proud of us.